Las Cruces, NM-Monday, Congressman Harry Teague was joined by members of New Mexico State University administration to highlight targeted investments in research projects that are vital to southern New Mexico and the University.

“In tough economic times like these – targeted investments right here at home become even more important,” said Congressman Harry Teague. “With cutting edge research projects like algal biofuels for aviation and keeping our nation’s food supply safe – NMSU will continue to be a key driver of economic development for our community and the entire southwest.”

The Congressman also toured the food safety lab at the school of Agriculture. The lab received $1.65 million during the 2010 appropriations process for continued work on new rapid test methods for analyses of food pathogens for possible regulatory use.

Congressman Teague has worked to secure over $7 million to support various projects at NMSU ranging from agricultural research projects to community engagement programs like the New Mexico Science, Engineering, Mathematics, and Aerospace Academy. NMSU has also received funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act for new and ongoing projects on campus.

Below is a summary of the projects receiving funding:

Renewable Energy

Algal Biofuels for Aviation- This project will develop algal biofuels for aviation. Research focuses on algal biomass production, conversion to aviation fuel, and optimizing gas turbines for these algal biofuels. $2,400,000

Microgrids and Renewable Energy And Technologies Research Initiative- The Initiative for Microgrids and Renewable Energy Technologies Research will address critical national energy issues of power production and transmission, with an emphasis on renewable and distributed technologies and electrical microgrids. $750,000

Agricultural Development

NMSU Agricultural Products Food Safety Laboratory - The laboratory evaluates new rapid test methods for microbiological analyses of food pathogens for possible regulatory use. $1,650,000

Efficient Irrigation - This initiative will continue to develop efficient agricultural and urban landscape irrigation systems to conserve water in the Rio Grande basin. $1,610,000

Cataloging Genes Associated with Drought and Disease Resistance - Studying drought resistant plants to increase water conservation in Agriculture. $176,000

Oil Resources from Desert Plants - Development of new high-value agricultural crops yielding industrial products for producing renewable energies. $176,000

Soil-borne Disease Prevention in Irrigated Agriculture-Study of methods for preventing crop damage due to soil-borne diseases in irrigated agriculture. $176,000

Range Improvement-Studying the impact of national policies on rangeland. $209,000

Nematode Resistance Genetic Engineering - Development of alternatives to crop pesticides which can destroy beneficial biological agents and contaminate groundwater. $209,000

Southern Great Plains Dairy Consortium - Addresses the major research and educational needs of the rapidly expanding dairy industry. $235,000

Southwest Consortium for Plant Genetics and Water Resources-Development of innovative plant biotechnology advances in agriculture in arid and semiarid regions. $271,000

Rapid Syndrome Validation Program - Syndromic Surveillance to allow veterinarians and public health officials to recognize and report initial outbreaks of highly infections epidemics in live stock and avian populations, thus allowing local, state, regional, and public health officials to respond with their full capabilities. $379,000

Community Engagement Programs

Southern NM Science, Engineering, Mathematics, and Aerospace Academy (SNM SEMAA)**-**Th e purpose of SNM SEMAA is to use the unique resources of Southern New Mexico to engage historically underrepresented youth in activities in the fields of science, engineering, mathematics, and technology. $200,000

Strengthening Our Nation's Defense

UAV Systems and Operations Validation Program-Allowing for expanded development and testing of small to mid-sized Unmanned Aerial Vehicles. $2,320,0000

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